REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 8-16, 18-29, 31-43 and 45-50 remain in this application. Claims 1, 19, 35, 47 and 48 are amended.

Applicants propose the above amendments to the claims in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion in the Advisory Action mailed November 3, 2003. These amendments have been made in order to further clarify that the claimed plurality of devices of the tipper and the rod maker for affecting parameters of the rod maker, the tipper and/or the cigarettes being manufactured, are different than the devices used in motion control of the tipper and the rod maker.

Applicants submit that these features were implicit in the originally presented claims, and therefore do not narrow the claims. As argued in the previous Request for Reconsideration filed October 14, 2003, Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed plurality of devices for monitoring and plurality of devices for affecting parameters of the rod maker, the tipper and/or the cigarettes being manufactured are different devices than the servo motors, which are provided for motion control of the machine. The claims are interpreted in light of the specification, and Applicants submit that the specification makes it clear that the devices which are connected to the field bus along with the controller, and which monitor and affect parameters of the rod maker, the tipper and/or the cigarettes being manufactured are different than the motion control devices such as the slaved motors referred to in Arthur et al. Further evidence of this distinction is provided by the doctrine of claim differentiation, since dependent Claim 2 further limits the novel combination of features in independent Claim 1 by further reciting a plurality of synchronous motors controlled by a motion controller. As explained in the specification at page 37, line 21-page 38, line 20, and shown in Fig. 30, the field bus 500 connects six main system blocks that include sensor blocks, pneumatic valves, variable speed drives for a picker/winnower, large and small fans, tobacco return, glue area sensors, pneumatic valve clutches and pneumatic auto cleaning valves. A motion controller 557 is connected to a central controller 550, but is not connected to the field bus 500. Therefore, as explained at page 38, lines 16-20, operating parameters input via the human/machine interfaces (HMIs) are

received first by the central controller, which can then send them to the motion controller if appropriate. Control of speed and phase of the synchronized motors is separate from the HMI functions.

For at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the novel combinations of features claimed in independent Claims 1, 19, 35, 47 and 48 are neither disclosed nor suggested in Arthur et al.

As also discussed in the Request for Reconsideration filed October 14, 2003, Applicants further submit that Arthur et al. does not disclose a plurality of devices for monitoring and a plurality of devices for affecting parameters of the rod maker, the tipper and/or the cigarettes being manufactured, wherein one or more of the monitoring devices and the parameter affecting devices both monitors and affects parameters, as well as a separate controller for controlling the plurality of devices on the tipper and the rod maker, including varying one or more parameters of the rod maker, the tipper and/or the cigarettes being manufactured, in response to conditions monitored by one or more of the devices. The rate meters/comparator device disclosed by Arthur et al. receives the pulsed outputs from pick-up devices, compares the voltages, and produces an output, such that these "devices" are also the "controller". Therefore, Arthur et al. fails to disclose or suggest a separate controller that controls a plurality of the "devices" in response to conditions monitored by one or more of the devices.

Applicants refer to page 37, lines 6-20 of the present application, wherein it is explained that the devices connected to the field bus may be similar to conventional devices with the addition of a processor or interface whose function is to code information for transmission and to decode messages that the device needs to receive. As further explained in the specification at page 37, lines 21-37, and shown in Fig. 30, a field bus 500 connects six main system blocks that include blocks of sensors, pneumatic valves, variable speed drives for a picker/winnower, large and small fans and tobacco return, glue area sensors, pneumatic valve clutches, pneumatic auto cleaning valves, etc. These devices that are connected to a field bus are able to both monitor and affect parameters as a result of the processors that are incorporated into the devices to code information for transmission and to decode messages that the device needs to receive. In contrast to the disclosure in Arthur

et al., Applicants' independent Claims 1, 19, 35, 47 and 48 set forth novel combinations of features including a plurality of devices that monitor and a plurality of devices that affect parameters, wherein the plurality of devices are not devices used in motion control of the tipper and the rod maker, and wherein each of said devices comprising an embedded processor or interface that codes information for transmission and decodes messages the device receives,.

For at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that all independent Claims 1, 19, 35, 47 and 48, and hence dependent Claims 2-6, 8-16, 18, 20-29, 31-34, 36-43, 45-46 and 49-50, are patentable.

Conclusion

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present patent application is in condition for allowance. An early indication of the allowability of the present patent application is therefore respectfully solicited.

If Examiner Jarrett believes that a telephone conference with the undersigned would expedite passage of the present patent application to issue, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' representative at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: November 19, 2003